

Volunteer Information Sheet

Welcome to Durlston! We hope you enjoy volunteering with us. People of all ages and diverse backgrounds and skills support the running of Durlston by helping with practical conservation, photography, administration, visitor services, surveys, education, research and more.

There are **8 members of staff** that you are likely to meet whilst volunteering here, they are...

Katie Black	<i>Senior Ranger</i> at Durlston – Overseeing all on site operations & the Purbeck area
Alistair Tuckey	<i>Durlston Ranger & Project Leader</i> for 'Durlston Pleasure Grounds' – Responsible for public engagement, education and communications work, and the 'Pleasure Grounds Project'
Paul Jones	<i>Durlston Ranger</i> – Responsible for Marine and Coastal Work
Catherine Carter	<i>Durlston Ranger</i> – Responsible for volunteers
Ben Tolley	<i>Community Ranger</i> – Working on the 'Durlston Pleasure Grounds Project'
Vacant Post	<i>Pleasure Grounds Apprentice Ranger</i> – 18 month apprenticeship
Vacant Post	<i>Park Apprentice Ranger</i> – 18 month apprenticeship
Vacant Post	<i>Public Engagement Assistant</i> – 18 month apprenticeship

We also have a number of long-term Volunteer Rangers, who support the Ranger team to carry out a range of tasks. For information about the Volunteer Ranger Service, other volunteer opportunities, how we can help you to volunteer, or if you have particular skills you would like to contribute, please speak to **Cat**.

When you volunteer for the first time, you will be asked to fill in a form with some personal details, which are treated in confidence. Please ensure that this is kept up to date (eg. change of address, or other details). Your data will be kept under lock and key and accessed only by Durlston Staff. It will not be shared with any other parties and will be destroyed two years after you cease volunteering with our organisation.

Tea and coffee are provided during the Wednesday and Thursday Work Parties. If you would like a drink whilst you are in the Learning Centre, please help yourself to the facilities available in the kitchen. If you are working in the Learning Centre, **please ensure you sign in and out when arriving and leaving**.

While volunteering, it is important to understand and follow our health and safety guidelines. We will provide safety equipment, such as steel toe-capped boots, goggles and gloves, and will show you how to use the tools required to complete tasks safely and effectively. Please don't be afraid to ask for guidance and **follow the instructions provided**. **They are there to keep you and those around you safe.**

Please **watch your footing** while walking around the Park or doing practical work as the ground can be uneven and slippery. **If working on your own you must take a radio with you.** Please ask a member of staff to show you how to operate the radio before setting out and check it is charged.

All members of staff are First Aid trained and any incidents that occur (no matter how minor) must be brought to their attention. First Aid kits can be found in the Castle, Learning Centre, the Mule off-road vehicle, or with the Work Party leader. **If you notice any safety issues around the Park or Castle please let a member of staff know.**

In the event of a fire in the Castle or Learning Centre, **do not attempt to tackle the fire** - calmly make your way out of the building to the staff car park if in the Learning Centre, or assembly points at the Castle, and raise the alarm.

Smoking is not permitted inside any building or in the vicinity of the garage.

The council have a random drugs and alcohol testing policy, use of machinery or vehicles brings you under this policy. If we believe you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs we will ask you to leave.

Please note we are not able to pay travel or subsistence expenses.

Dorset Council and Durlston Country Park are committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults from abuse, whether physical, verbal, sexual or by neglect. Unless you have undertaken an induction to work with these groups, avoid situations where you are in sole contact with them and report any concerns in confidence to Ali, Katie or the DC Safeguarding Team.

If you have any problems, issues, concerns or grievances whilst volunteering please speak to any member of staff, who will deal with it appropriately and in confidence.

Volunteer Information Sheet

Information about Durlston - website: www.durlston.co.uk
email: info@durlston.co.uk
phone: 01929 424443

- **Durlston Country Park**, 1 mile from Swanage, covers 280 acres of coast and countryside and was Dorset's first Country Park. Durlston is owned and managed by Dorset Council (DC), for the enjoyment of the public and the conservation of its rich biodiversity. It is recognised as a NNR (National Nature Reserve) and a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest).
- Durlston supports a wide array of **wildlife** including 34 types of butterflies, 250+ bird species and over 500 plant species (including many which are nationally important). For the latest wildlife sightings, see the Daily Diary in the Visitor Centre or on our website.
- **FoD (Friends of Durlston)** are the supporters group for the Park, with more than 700 members. Members pay an annual subscription, which supports the running of the Park. They benefit from a monthly newsletter, reduced car parking costs, special FoD events and discounted tickets to public events. Discounts apply in the seventhwave restaurant. FoDs also have an input, through an elected committee, into the running of the Park.
- The Castle **Visitor Centre** is free, and open: Easter to October – every day 10.00 to 17.00; November to March from 10.00 to 16.00. A range of guided walks and events run throughout the year, more information can be found on the website (www.durlston.co.uk)
- **Access for All** – We aim to provide a welcoming and accessible environment for visitors and volunteers. We have 2 Trampers (electric mobility vehicles) that can be hired and driven (after brief training) around most of the park and an off-road wheelchair available to hire – visit www.durlston.co.uk for more information about accessing the Park
- **Education** – Durlston is a superb outdoor classroom and is visited by hundreds of school groups each year. The Rangers can provide a variety of Discovery Sessions for schools.
- **Geology** – Durlston is part of Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site. The rocks within Durlston Bay provide the best record through the late Jurassic and early Cretaceous periods (140 to 130 million years ago) in Britain. The oldest rocks, the Portland Limestone, form the headland (Durlston Head) and were laid down in a shallow sea. Above them lie the famous Purbeck Beds, formed in shallow lagoons and swamps surrounded by arid salt flats. Many fossils can be found in these rocks, but the cliffs and shore in Durlston Bay can be unstable and dangerous.
- **George Burt** purchased a significant area of Durlston in 1863 and following his retirement in 1883, started developing his estate. The Castle was to be the centrepiece of this development that he hoped would include nearly 90 houses (but few were ever built). He planted many exotic plant species that can be found along the Woodland Trail and also commissioned the Great Globe and other inscriptions, which can be found around the Park.
- **The Durlston Pleasure Grounds Project** – A £1.1m project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Big Lottery Fund and other partners to enhance Durlston's Grade II Listed Victorian landscape for nature, heritage and community between 2018 and 2022.
- A **Bus Service** operates May – Sept between Durlston and Swanage. Please request 'Sunnydale' for the Shed.
- **Free parking is available in the car parks for volunteers** displaying a parking permit. All other cars need to pay for their parking in the car park and park in the designated areas. The funds raised from these charges directly support conservation work at Durlston. 3 ticket machines are located around the car parks and a drop-off point for disabled visitors near the Learning Centre and Castle.
- **Dogs** are welcome around the Park and in the Castle, but should be kept on a lead or under close control. Visitors should use the dog bins provided.
- **Art** exhibitions and workshops are a popular and valuable part of our work, helping support the running of the park, attracting new visitors and helping highlight the natural environment
- **Weddings** generate valuable income to support the conservation of Durlston
- The Park is now financially self-sustaining, running at no **cost** to DCC, paying all staff wages and costs.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet, please keep hold of it for reference. More information on Durlston is available from leaflets in the Visitor Centre, the website (www.durlston.co.uk), Facebook and on the many events run by the Ranger team at Durlston. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to ask a member of staff.

We hope you enjoy your volunteering with us and will want to come back in the future. Volunteers play a vital role in the running of the park and we appreciate you giving us your time.